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UNCLAS CAIRO 001697

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: EGYPT REPORTS FIRST HUMAN CASE OF AVIAN INFLUENZA

REF: CAIRO 01492

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

1. (SBU) The U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU-3) in Cairo confirmed the first reported human case of H5 Influenza infection in Egypt in a 35-year-old woman from a village in the governorate of Qalyoubiya, Egypt's major center of poultry production. The woman, Amal Mohamed Ismael, died March 17, two days after admission to Abassiya Pulmonary Hospital. The GOE announced the death at a press conference the morning of March 18. The GOE's official announcement can be found at <http://birdflu.sis.gov.eg/html/flu010187.htm>

2. (SBU) NAMRU-3 reports that Ismael had originally denied contact with chickens, but in fact the family had hidden poultry in the victim's bedroom, contrary to GOE regulations prohibiting household poultry. Ismael slaughtered some chickens after others began dying. She originally entered the Abassiya Fever Hospital's outpatient clinic for treatment for a urinary tract infection, and then complained of generalized aching. She was transferred to a different local governorate hospital, and later to the Abassiya Pulmonary Hospital because she had developed pneumonia. Despite the GOE statement that the victim was treated with Tamiflu, Dr. Yehya Sultan, director of the Abassiya Fever Hospital, told NAMRU-3 Tamiflu was not administered.

3. (SBU) Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) tests indicated the woman was positive for both influenza A and H5; NAMRU-3 confirmed this early on March 18. Results from PCR testing to confirm N1 will take a few days. Ismael's other family members appear to be free of the virus.
RICCIARDONE